

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE TOWN CENTER TRAFFIC & PARKING COMMITTEE
FOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
12/08/2015**

My name is Gail Flannery, here along with Jeannette Wilkinson. We are Co-Chairs of the Town Center Traffic & Parking Committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen as a result of the NMCOG March 2014 study. Based on the guidelines and directives approved by the BOS, our purpose is to provide recommendations to improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety and parking capacity in the Center. We are here this evening to bring forth both the long and short term recommendations of our Committee.

A copy of our recommendations is in your packet. We will also cover our proposed timeline and next steps.

At this point I would like to introduce the rest of the members of the Town Center Traffic & Parking Committee: Emily Benson, Kristina Greene, Ellen Harde, Shari O'Connor, Andrea Peraner-Sweet and Milind Tamaskar.

After several months of reviewing the NMCOG study, meeting with the Town Engineering, Highway and Police Departments, our Committee recommends the following:

TRAFFIC

1. Install a Three Way Stop at the intersection of Boston Road and Main Street to even traffic flow from all sides

a. Long Term

The NMCOG study did not include the development of a design for “a multi-way stop sign option” at Boston Road and Main Street (discussed on page 60 of the study). Design plans would be funded as part of the \$60,000 TEC study that Town Engineer Paul Starratt has requested in his FY17 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017) budget. Allocation of funds for implementation of a 3-way stop would have to be approved by Town Meeting after completion of that study.

b. Short term

In the interim, we are requesting funding from the Board of Selectmen for a traffic officer at Boston Road and Main Street during peak commuter hours (as identified by NMCOG) when Westford schools are in session from September 2016 through June 2017.

2. **Install a Bump-out (curb extension) in front of the Parish Center for the Arts**

This extension will decrease the speed of motorists turning onto Lincoln Street from Boston Road (described on page 57 of the NMCOG report) thereby increasing pedestrian safety. A bump-out will also provide patrons of the PCA with a larger and safer landing at the base of the stairs when entering and exiting the building.

a. **Long Term**

A permanent curb extension design would be part of the TEC study mentioned above. Funding for implementation would also have to be approved by Town Meeting and the PCA board has been asked to reaffirm their 2011 vote to allocate PCA funds to the project.

b. **Short Term**

Beginning in the spring of 2017, we recommend a temporary bump-out. This could be accomplished by placing “vehicle-friendly” barriers, such as planters on Lincoln Street in front of the PCA. Mark Fenton, who spoke on traffic calming in his talk at the Regency last month, could be consulted for ideas. Chip Barrett stressed that for the bump-out to be effective, the No Parking hatch lined area on the left side of Lincoln Street would have to be repainted to allow for a wider turning radius. The No Parking zone would need to be adhered to and enforced. It was further suggested that more lighting on the crosswalk in front of the PCA is needed and the PCA board is being asked to discuss PCA funding for the lighting. Signage on Boston Road to alert motorists of the reconfigured right turn onto Lincoln Street should be considered in conjunction with the temporary bump-out.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

1. **Install a crosswalk at the intersection of Boston Road and Main Street**

a. **Short Term**

In order to provide ADA compliant access from the Hildreth Street side of Boston Road onto the Common, the existing brick sidewalk in front of the Northern Bank & Trust would have to be extended. This would require an easement from the property owners at 1Hildreth Street. The new crosswalk would require curb cuts and ADA ramps to connect to the existing sidewalk on the Common. The cost would be determined by a contract design request from the Engineering Department for FY2015 (approximately \$5,000). We ask for a warrant article from the Board of Selectmen to request the required funding for implementation at the 2016 Annual Town Meeting on April 2.

PARKING

1. Parking at the Police Station after 4pm per prior BOS approval

Due to the limited parking capacity currently in the center, we recommend that the BOS allow public parking on weekends and after the Town Hall closes at 4pm on weekdays in the parking lot between the fire station and the property at 4 Lincoln Street. We also recommend updated signage. We further recommend that Town Hall employees park in this lot during business hours to allow more parking to residents utilizing Town Hall.

2. J.V. Fletcher Library expanded parking

We have been working closely with the Library and are pleased to see that they are taking steps to increase the footprint of their parking.

OUR NEXT STEPS

1. Meeting with neighbors in the Center

All abutters to the Common will be invited to a meeting with our Committee to hear our recommendations and provide feedback. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at the Millennium School at 7pm.

2. Upon approval by the BOS of the above recommendations

Present these recommendations to Town Meeting for implementation.